

**This is a guide for employees of Children's Homes. It is written to clearly lay out the expectations of all employees when either bringing their own keys into the work place or handling Leeds Childrens' Homes keys at work. This guidance must be followed at all times and adherence to this protocol should be periodically checked by the Manager/Deputy Manager.**

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## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS including KEYS:**

- Personal belongings and personal keys are to be kept locked in a staff bedroom on arrival at the home. Where lockers are provided for this purpose, then these must be used to store personal belongings. Personal belongings should not be kept in home's main office.

## **CHILDREN'S HOMES KEYS:**

- Remember: All areas of the home should be unlocked except staff bedrooms which contain personal belongings and the main office, which would hold access to personal information. Rooms should NOT, as a rule be locked in all other areas of the home even at night, unless there is a clear and relevant risk to the safety and security of the home. The risk assessment that would identify this measure as appropriate should be reviewed at least monthly or sooner if appropriate.

Children can ask to have their rooms locked if they wish.

- There should be only enough keys available in the home to allow for the efficient running of the home. Excessive numbers of keys on a bunch should be replaced with a smaller number of master keys.
- Each set of keys should be clearly identified as distinct from each other.
- Each employee on shift, who is to have keys, should sign out a distinct set of keys; clearly evidencing the date and time that the keys were taken into their possession. At the end of each shift the keys will be signed back into the key safe before being reallocated to the on-coming shift.
- Keys should NOT be passed between staff members on shift or left for the on-coming staff members – ALL KEYS SHOULD BE SIGNED IN and OUT.
- It is your responsibility to ensure the keys are safely secured upon your person, at all times. When at work, the keys should not be on generally visible on the person and should preferable be kept in your pocket and attached to your clothing with an extendable keyring (these will be provided).
- Under no circumstances should the home's keys be unclipped and handed to a child or unclipped and left on tables, work surfaces or left unattended on any occasion.